

**BOARD LETTER – SUMMARY SHEET
HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES CLUSTER**

AGENDA REVIEW	May 4, 2016
BOARD MEETING	May 17, 2016
SD	All
DEPARTMENT	Mental Health
SUBJECT	Request approval to enter into agreements with three qualified agencies to provide sign language interpreter services for hearing-impaired mental health clients.
PROGRAM	As part of its responsibilities to provide community mental health services in compliance with federal and State requirements, DMH has made professional sign language interpreter services available to hearing impaired persons seeking mental health services. These agreements will allow DMH to utilize the services of professional interpreters on an as-needed basis to meet this need. Accordingly, DMH is asking for authority to execute these agreements and to execute agreements with other qualified providers to ensure that this population has continued access to mental health services.
DEADLINES	None
COST & FUNDING	<p>The total amount of funding available for these agreements in FY 2016-17 is \$165,000, fully funded with \$90,000 in Sales Tax Realignment funds and \$75,000 in State MHSA revenue. Funding for these agreements is included in DMH's FY 2016-17 Recommended Budget. Funding for future years will be requested through DMH's annual budget request process.</p> <p>There is no net County cost associated with these actions.</p>
PURPOSE OF REQUEST	Approval of the recommendations will allow the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to ensure the continued availability and accessibility of professional sign language interpreter services for hearing-impaired mentally ill clients by authorizing DMH to enter into new agreements with three sign language providers whose current agreements are set to expire on June 30, 2016.
SUMMARY/ ISSUES (Briefly summarize program and potential issues or concerns. Identify changes, if any, to level of funding or staffing; how funding will be utilized and why best use; and prior accomplishments.)	<p>The Americans with Disabilities Act and other federal and State regulations mandate the availability of sign language interpreter services. As part of its responsibilities to provide community mental health services in accordance with federal and State laws, the County of Los Angeles offers professional sign language interpreter services to hearing-impaired persons receiving County services. In 2009, in order to meet the needs of DMH's non-English speaking, hearing impaired clients, your Board authorized DMH to establish a pool of professional sign language interpreter service providers and to add agencies to the pool of qualified providers. Since 2009, DMH has contracted with three agencies to provide interpreter services. These agencies provide services on both an as needed and emergency basis at directly-operated and contracted program sites. The three existing agreements are set to expire on June 30, 2016.</p> <p>Approval of this action will ensure the continued availability and accessibility of professional sign language interpreter services for hearing-impaired mentally ill clients on both a routine and emergency basis.</p>
DEPT CONTACT	Deputy Director: Irma Castaneda, (213) 738-4924, ICastaneda@dmh.lacounty.gov County Counsel: Stephanie Reagan, (213) 974-0941, Sreagan@counsel.lacounty.gov